

Balloon Math

Grade Level: 1 - 6

Skills: Striking skills, hand-eye coordination, math skills, mental math, and teamwork

Objective: Students will use teamwork and striking skills to keep balloons off the ground. After the exercise, they will perform a variety of math operations to solve problems.

Equipment: Balloons (1 per student with a few extra in case of popping), index cards, tape or hula hoops

Organization:

- This is a lesson that can take place in the classroom, gym area, or outside. Set boundaries if playing outdoors, such as the marked basketball court or the diamond area of the baseball field. Choose the math skill or skills that you want to practice using during this game. Create a list of “possible answers” and then create a list of math problems that, when calculated, yield each of those answers. Develop a list of possible answers equal to the number of students in your classroom. For each possible answer, create 3 matching math problems. Write each of those 3 math problems on a different index card.
- Blow up the balloons, one per student. On each balloon, use a thick black marker to write one of the possible answers for which you have developed math problems. Have some additional balloons on hand in case a balloon pops during the game.
- Randomly tape the math problem index cards all over the walls or windows of the space where you play the game. If your space is large enough, you could place them in hula hoops on the floor around the perimeter of the room.
- Organize students into pairs and place balloons all throughout the space.

Activity:

- On the signal “go” or when the whistle blows, have all students pick up a balloon with their feet only, then hit their balloons into the air and keep them in the air by contacting the balloon with parts of their body. Start with the hands and then try different body parts, i.e. elbows, knees, or head. Students are to keep their balloons in the air and not let any balloon touch the ground. If their balloon falls to the ground, they must get it back up by using their feet only until they can catch it in their hands and continue hitting it in the air.
- Play continues until you give the stop signal. Play for about 5 minutes or until you feel the students have had a good bit of exercise or have tried all different body parts as above. At that time, each student should hold onto the nearest balloon. If any balloon has popped during play, replace those balloons with one of the balloons you have held in reserve. Write the number from the popped balloon on the new balloon and put it into play. Have students join their partner and place one of their balloons in a corner of the room.
- Instruct students to look at the number on the balloon they are holding. Have students find the 3 index cards that have math problems on them that, when calculated, end up with an answer that is the same as the number on their balloon. One of them must keep their balloon in the air while the other one looks for and finds their card. They must stay together in their search. If their balloon falls to the ground, or if they find one of their cards, they switch positions and now the other one keeps the balloon in the air as their partner searches for their card.
- After students locate **each** card, check their math. Have them replace the card if it is not the correct card and continue searching. They need to find 3 correct index cards. If all 3 cards are correct, send them back to the corner for another balloon and replace the cards in the hula hoops for others. The pair of students who get done with two balloons first are the lucky pair!
- Place balloons back in the center of the room, let students pick new balloons and go again.

Variations:

1. Work on soccer skill of eye-foot coordination and have students keep balloons up with only their feet.
2. Use rackets to contact balloons to keep them in the air.
3. Try adaptations of this game for vocabulary, states, authors etc.

Closure:

1. Was it easier to work math problems if you had the answer first?
2. What part of the body was the easiest to use to keep your balloon in the air?

Piloted at Farmington Elementary, January 2007

Adapted from PE Central

Loco Motion

Language Arts/P.E. Activity

Grade Level: 4-6

Skill: Underhand and overhand throws, low, medium and high levels, identifying verbs and adverbs, locomotor movements, spatial awareness.

Objective: The students will use tossing skills to identify verbs and adverbs and will incorporate different locomotor skills to demonstrate proper usage of the verb and adverb.

Equipment: Enough index cards for each student in the class with verbs on half of the cards (i.e., run, gallop, slide) and adverbs on the other half (i.e., rapidly, quietly, lively), one beanbag per student, lively music and a CD/tape player.

Organization: The students will get one beanbag and find an open space in the general area. Scatter the index cards on the floor of the playing area. Instruct the students on the various types of throws they will be using and make sure they understand the meaning of low, medium and high levels when they throw. Review dominant and non-dominant hands.

Activity: The teacher designates the type of throw, which level and which hand to use for each round of activity.

When the music starts, the students will use the identified throw to throw their beanbags to a card then move to the card. The students read the word on the card and will determine if the word is a verb or an adverb.

If the word is a verb, the student will hold the card above his/her head. A student holding an adverb card will move to a student with a verb card. The pair will then perform the action on the cards (slide quickly). When they have completed the actions, place the cards back on the floor, pick up the beanbag and toss it at a different card.

Closure: 1. How do you identify a verb? An adverb? (Verbs tell of something being done, an adverb tells how things are done)

2. What helps to identify most adverbs? (Most adverbs are formed by adding 'ly' to an adjective)

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Brain Battle

Grade Level: K-6

Skills: Following directions, working on a variety of classroom subjects and a light warm-up.

Objective: Students will learn different curriculum in an engaging manner.

Equipment: A variety of questions from a variety of subjects.

Organization: Students are in squad formation and the questions are placed in the middle of the room.

Activity: When the music starts or when I say “go” one student from each group walks, jogs or skips etc. to the middle of the room and picks up a card, e.g. $\frac{1}{9}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$. The students in the middle determine who has the highest number, lowest number or the median number, so if you chose the highest number to win, that student would collect the cards among that group of students and would proceed to walk, jog or run back to their respective group and place their cards in a pile. The next person in line then repeats the same process. When everyone has gone two, three or more times determine which group has garnered the most cards. Any ties are broken by performing a quick paper, rock, scissors.

Variations: Have the students rank their numbers from least to greatest or vice versa. Have the students separate odd numbers from even numbers.

Language arts could have the students determine ABC order and the first word in a dictionary takes the pile or the word in the middle etc.

Science could have the students determine the most weight or volume etc. e.g. 2 ounces, 4 pounds, 100 kilograms or 1,000 tons which one weighs the most?

Geography could have the students determine which land mass is the biggest, has the most people or which area is colder, hotter or closer to the equator; e.g. which is more populated, Centerville, Utah, California or China.

Closure: Why is it important to work together as a team?
Did you enjoy a new way to learn old things? Why or why not?